

Rev. A. A. Phelps,
Boston,
Ms.

Rev. Dr. Anderson

New York, Oct. 8. '42

Dear Bro. Phelps, Your note of Sep 23^d came to hand this day.

The matter about which you write has need attention. The Depository makes the following Memorandum:

"The Nov. Tract for Boston was sent Sep. 14. The Dec. & Jan. Tracts will be sent before Nov. 1. The New Year's Tract as soon as ready. Sometimes they are too late in ordering, & then of course we cannot always have the Tract ready a month in advance." "A."

From the usual punctuality of Mr. Ackley I should presume that orders in season, would receive seasonable attention: but if there has been any neglect, your letter will obviate it in future.

You will see by the enclosed Circular what we propose to accomplish for our good cause. I think we may reasonably anticipate a pleasant and useful meeting. We hope you will make it convenient to attend, and render you aid in our deliberations, and gain whatever impulse you can in the noble cause. If it would do any good, or if it were at all needed, we would urge you to come.

Bring as many of our brethren with you from Boston as you can.

We are in the hurry of preparation for the meeting, & I cannot add.

With sincere attachments,

Yours,

R. S. Cook,
Cu. Secy. &c.

Providential facilities for distribution, in any such measure that the present race of accessible heathen may receive at least as much knowledge of Christ as is contained in a Tract, before they die ?

Incidental topics like the following may also be introduced, and afford themes for profitable discussion : viz.

The encouragement derived from the history of the Press, and the labors of *Colporteurs*, in the present and past centuries ;

The best method of securing the personal co-operation of christians with the ministry, in giving the Gospel to the poor and destitute ;

The need and encouragement for reviving extensively the Miscellaneous Distribution of Tracts, especially among the unevangelized ;

The dangers of our country from the flood of issues of a fictitious and corrupt Press, and the best means of counteracting them ;

The results of the volume circulation as observed by pastors and others, in promoting revivals of religion, quickening christians and leading sinners to the Savior ;

The Providential indications of duty to attempt the *individual conversion* of errorists and infidels ; and the facilities afforded for it by the *Colporteur* system, which was the right arm of the Reformation ;

The relations of the Society to all Foreign Missionary Boards, and to Evangelical Societies on the Continent of Europe ;

The influence of the Society in giving character to the literature of Pagan nations ;

The use of the Press in the daily routine of missionary labors, and its proportionate and progressive importance, as a means of usefulness for new missionaries while acquiring different languages ; for native converts in receiving and diffusing the Gospel ; for all foreign laborers in their intercourse with those around them, and in reaching the heathen who are distant from the mission stations ; and as a means of perpetuating the influence and acquisitions of the missionary, when removed by persecution or death ;

The impracticability of reaching any considerable portion of the existing race of the heathen world without a more vigorous employment of this agency ;

The best means of securing the steady co-operation of

pastors, churches, auxiliaries and friends of the Society in systematic annual efforts in aid of the Society's funds ; and finally,

The total inadequacy of the means, on the present scale of contributions from the churches, to meet the Providential claims and openings, either in this country or in foreign lands.

Is it too much to ask of the Directors and friends of the Society, after seventeen years of anxious toil on the part of the Committee, that they assemble to consult on themes of such solemn interest, pertaining to the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom ? And will not those who are providentially detained, raise their hearts to God for the descent of the Holy Spirit on the assembly of his servants, and for a blessing on the truth now in the hands of millions, awaiting only the life-giving power from on high to make it the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation to thousands of precious souls.

By order and in behalf of the Board of Directors.

THEODORE FRELINGHUYSEN, *President.*

JAMES MILNOR,	R. T. HAINES,	} Executive Committee.
THOMAS M'AULEY,	T. C. DOREMUS,	
JOHN KNOX,	EDWARD RICHARDSON,	
CHARLES G. SOMMERS,	JAMES C. ELISS,	
ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER,	WILLIAM FORREST,	
JUSTIN EDWARDS,	WILLIAM WINTERTON,	
JOHN STEARNS,	JAMES W. DOMINICK,	
MOSES ALLEN,		

William A. Hallock,	} Secretaries.
O. Eastman,	
R. S. Cook,	

New-York, 150 Nassau-street, Sept. 28, 1842.

It is expected that a Sermon will be preached before the Society on the evening of Tuesday ; and that a public meeting will be held on Wednesday evening, and perhaps one on Thursday evening—at which several foreign missionaries and gentlemen from different parts of the country will take part in the exercises.

Hospitable provision will be made for Directors, Delegates, Members and friends attending the meeting, by applying at the Society's House, 150 Nassau-street.

Rev. R. L. Cook,

New York, Oct. 8. 1842.

PUBLIC MEETING OF THE BOARD OF THE AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.

64

This Institution has prosecuted its work for seventeen years, and enjoyed a large measure of the Divine blessing on its extended operations. During all this period no public deliberative meeting of its Board of Directors has been held, to give expression to feelings of gratitude to God for his smiles, to investigate the principles involved or the plans pursued in its operations, or to consult for the extension of its influence over the earth.

Meanwhile the Providence of God has opened up one sphere of useful labor after another in our own land, and one kingdom after another abroad, until it may be said that "the field" of this Society is "the world." There has been a corresponding expansion in the strength and importance of the instrumentalities employed, until the two great elements of moral power, *the press*, in a thousand publications at home, and near twice that number in about 100 languages and dialects abroad, combined with the *personal agency* of the people of God, constitute the levers with which we seek to elevate the human race.

In our own country, something has been done where the ministry is enjoyed, to strengthen its hands by pressing on christians the obligation to labor personally for the salvation of the destitute around them, in connection with the circulation of religious books and Tracts, and by supplying the congregations with standard practical treatises of this and other ages; and for the unevangelized population, thousands of dollars have been appropriated annually. The 2,000,000 books, and 60,000,000 Tracts circulated by the Society, may be supposed to have done something to direct the popular taste for reading into a healthful, biblical channel, besides being blessed in the sanctification of multitudes of believers, and the conversion of thousands of the impenitent.

On the continent of Europe, the revival of spiritual religion has been encouraged and aided by our appropriations, while in Russia and elsewhere the press is *the only* means employed by this and kindred institutions for communicating the light of salvation.

In those portions of the world occupied by American and other missions, the Society is happily identified with every advance in the spread of the Gospel. All our principal foreign missions of the various denominations avail themselves of the appropriations of this Society for publishing the books and Tracts which come within the scope of its principles, covering the greater part of all their issues. Thus the American Tract Society is giving character to the popular reading of millions of this and succeeding generations.

But we have a deep and painful conviction that the Providential openings before the Society are immeasurably in advance of the faith and spirit of consecration of person and

property which animate its friends and patrons. While God has led the Society along from step to step, till *standard books* constitute one of its most powerful means of usefulness, and in the missionary aspects of the work, pious, devoted *Colporteurs* are needed in great numbers, both involving the expenditure of large sums; and while, too, the mind of an awakening world is calling for light, the conceptions of many of the Society's friends, and their corresponding benefactions, it is feared, have extended no farther than the early, though important feature of the enterprise—the supply of the 10,000,000 of our own land with pamphlet Tracts. How else can the fact be accounted for, that of the \$30,000 absolutely needed the last year for foreign appropriations, only \$15,000 were contributed; or the still more alarming fact, that of the \$40,000 demanded by the present condition of foreign stations, only \$1500 have been received in the first five months of this year; and that of the like sum of \$40,000 indispensable to sustain home operations, even on the present limited scale, less than \$7000, exclusive of legacies, have come into the treasury? Are our conceptions of the spiritual wants of the destitute at home and abroad too vivid, or our plans for their supply too large? Or is there not a prevalent misconception and apathy, that we ought, in the fear of God, and for the sake of the perishing, to attempt to remove?

With this view it has been thought expedient and necessary to convene a PUBLIC MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, including the *Vice-Presidents* and other officers of the Society and *Life Directors*; and they are hereby requested to assemble at the Broadway Tabernacle, in the City of New-York, on Tuesday, the 25th day of October, at 4 o'clock P. M. Life Members, Delegates from Auxiliaries, Pastors of churches, and friends of the Society generally, are cordially invited to attend.

Important topics like the following, will occupy the attention of the Board: viz.

Shall the Executive Committee prosecute the work of supplying the millions of the unevangelized population of our own country, and especially the destitute at the West, including probably 1,000,000 German emigrants, with at least one book for each family, by sale or gift, through the agency of pious *Colporteurs* and the co-operation of christians, on such a scale that the *existing generation* may be reached? and will the churches adequately sustain this *Home Enterprise*?

Can the Committee encourage the several Foreign Missionary Boards and their Missionaries, and the Societies and friends on the continent of Europe, to expect appropriations for the publication of approved Tracts and Books, corresponding to their increased wants and the